

Does my child need a cell phone?

Ask your child whether they need a cell phone and their answer is inevitably going to be yes; however, their reasoning for *needing* a cell phone is typically different from that of their parents. When making this decision, parents are encouraged to consider several factors; one of most important being whether it is age appropriate. It's more likely that a teenager would benefit from a cell phone as opposed to younger children, especially in the event that they are driving and break down or become lost. From a safety perspective, cell phones allow children and their parents to check in with one another frequently. Cell phones also prove to be convenient for children or parents to notify one another about a change of plans or that they may be late.

When making this decision, parents need to consider what the cell phone would most likely be used for and whether their children are responsible enough to care for the phone and use it appropriately. In the event, that parents decide to provide a cell phone to their children, they are encouraged to consider setting limits including who they can call and how many minutes can be used. Parents might also want to consider having their children turn the phone into them when they arrive home, so that they do not use it to stay up late talking when they should be sleeping. Regardless of this decision, parents should talk with their children about the intent of cell phones and the safety precautions that accompany them.